



# NORTHEAST IDAHO

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON, & TETON COUNTIES

## 2004 SUMMARY

### Population Growth in the LMA

Population change is a major growth indicator. Recent figures show that the population of the LMA—Bingham, Bonneville, Butte and Jefferson counties—increased 4.6 percent according to Census data from April 2000 to July 2003, as shown in Northeast Table 2 on page 33. By the numbers, Bonneville County added the most with 4,485 more people; Bingham and Jefferson counties added more than 1,000 people each and Butte County showed a slight decrease of 26 people. By percentage growth, both Jefferson and Bonneville counties showed a population increase of 5.4 percent each while Bingham County's population increased 2.9 percent. Butte County's population dropped nine-tenths of a percentage point. Specific cities that largely contributed to the growth include Ammon with a 2,436-person increase, Idaho Falls with a 777-person increase and Blackfoot with a 227-person increase.

From April 2002 to July 2003, the LMA's population grew 1.9 percent, an addition of nearly 3,000 people. Jefferson County showed the greatest percentage growth followed closely by Bonneville County. Again, larger contributing cities were from Bonneville County (Ammon with an 868-person increase and Idaho Falls with a 419-person increase) and Bingham County (Blackfoot with a 114-person increase). Ammon, which is just on the outskirts of Idaho Falls, continues to grow. Businesses have discovered that the Grand Teton Mall and other business centers across the city line provide a good location as it is clustered around the Edward Cinemas complex. In addition, some businesses have started migrating east on Seventeenth Street around the Kmart Super Center. Idaho Falls continues to show steady growth as the largest city in the LMA and the third largest in the state behind Boise and Nampa. Blackfoot is conveniently nestled halfway between Pocatello (fourth largest city in the state) and Idaho Falls where it can receive spillover from the two communities besides enjoying its own natural growth.

### Population Growth—Eastern Idaho

The nine counties comprising Northeast Idaho, which includes the LMA, showed a larger percentage growth in population overall than in the LMA—5.4 percent from April 2000 to July 2003 and 2.1 percent from 2002 to 2003. Teton County was the greatest population contributor in terms of percentages, with Madison County being the next greatest. Teton County has shown substantial growth due to its prime landscape, scenery and proximity to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and the Grand Targhee Ski Resort. While Teton County grew by 1,059 people

from April 2000 to July 2003, Bonneville County grew by 4,485 people, Madison County grew by 2,411 people and Jefferson County grew by 1,039 people. Madison County's largest city, Rexburg, showed a 4,605-person increase over the three-year period. Rexburg's large growth stems from the conversion of two-year Ricks College to the four-year Brigham Young University–Idaho in 2001. Announcement of the merger brought immediate responses such as a marked increase in student applications and interested business investors, both adding to the growth of the area as the university continues to grow. More students are remaining in Rexburg after graduation and starting families and real estate has dramatically increased in value and demand. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, which runs the university, also recently announced the addition of a temple in Rexburg, which will add to future growth of the area. Butte, Clark, Custer and Lemhi counties continue to show small but steady population declines.

Recently released state Census data indicates Idaho's population grew 1.9 percent from July 2003 to July 2004, ranking it the fourth fastest-growing state in the nation, by percent. County information is not yet available for July 2004.

Comparing construction permits and valuations is one measure of an area's economy for a specific period of time. The most recent Wells Fargo Bank Idaho Construction Report, dated September 2004, shows construction activity for the LMA, including Rigby, Blackfoot, Idaho Falls, Ammon, Jefferson County Unincorporated and Bonneville County Unincorporated. Total construction dollars increased almost \$32 million in the nine-month cumulative figures of January to September 2004 compared to the same time period in 2003. Most of this increase—nearly \$24 million—occurred in Idaho Falls and mostly for non-residential units. Bonneville County had a total increase of almost \$40 million. Rigby also showed an increase of \$2.3 million, with \$2 million from residential units alone. Total permits increased by almost 200 in the area, with the largest amount from Bonneville County. Of those permits, 300 new dwelling units were included (one permit can include multiple dwelling units depending on the makeup of the dwelling).

The report also included construction totals for Lemhi County, Fremont County Unincorporated and the cities of Rexburg, Salmon and St. Anthony. Rexburg showed a \$37 million decrease in total construction dollars and a decrease of 90 permits (including a decrease of 472 new dwelling units) from January to September 2004 cumulative totals compared to the same time frame in 2003. The decline is mostly due to the overbuilding of married student housing that took place the previous two years in anticipation of more married students attending BYU–Idaho

Northeastern Idaho Table 1: Population Changes 2000 Census to July 1, 2003					
	Census Population	7/1/2000 Population	7/1/2001 Population	7/1/2002 Population	7/1/2003 Population
United States	281,421,906	282,177,754	285,093,813	287,973,924	290,809,777
Idaho	1,293,953	1,299,610	1,321,309	1,343,124	1,366,332
Bonneville County	82,522	82,884	83,824	85,141	87,007
Butte County	2,899	2,900	2,859	2,921	2,873
Clark County	1,022	1,030	978	961	904
Custer County	4,342	4,340	4,265	4,165	4,090
Fremont County	11,819	11,794	11,833	11,878	12,107
Jefferson County	19,155	19,231	19,327	19,741	20,194
Lemhi County	7,806	7,745	7,665	7,757	7,731
Madison County	27,467	27,435	28,124	28,959	29,878
Teton County	5,999	6,113	6,450	6,829	7,058
Northeast Total	163,031	163,472	165,325	168,352	171,842
Bingham County	41,735	41,807	42,232	42,378	42,926
Bonneville County	82,522	82,884	83,824	85,141	87,007
Butte County	2,899	2,900	2,859	2,921	2,873
Jefferson County	19,155	19,231	19,327	19,741	20,194
LMA Total	146,311	146,822	148,242	150,181	153,000

since its 2001 conversion to a four-year university. A \$12 million decrease in new nonresidential valuation came about mostly because of university expansion projects started in 2003. Lemhi County showed no change in the number of permits, but experienced an approximate \$1 million increase in total construction dollars in new *Non-residential Construction and Additions, Alterations & Repairs*. Fremont County showed a decrease in total permits and approximately a \$7 million decrease in total construction dollars. Construction started on the new North Fremont High School in 2003 that would have been included in those totals.

Permits and their construction values are counted in the month in which they are filed even though most projects extend for several months. Large, complex construction projects can influence an area's economy for many years. Therefore, the numbers from construction are good indicators of economic activity, but by themselves do not represent the growth or decline of an area.

## YEARLY DEVELOPMENTS AND CHANGES

- Battelle Energy Alliance (BEA) was named the new main contractor of Research and Development at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL) for the next 10 years, and replaced Bechtel BWXT on February 1, 2005. The nuclear site's name was changed to the Idaho National Laboratory (INL). BEA is comprised of Battelle Memorial Institute, BWXT Services Inc., Washington Group International, the Electric Power Research Institute and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The U.S. Department of Energy awarded BEA the contract through a bidding process. A second major contract focusing on the cleanup at the INL is still in the bidding process. A decision is expected soon.

- Grow Idaho Falls, Inc., headed by CEO and President Kipp Hicks, is the new name of the former Eastern Idaho Economic Development Council (EIEDC). The new entity focuses on economic development specifically in Bonneville County. The former council was responsible for promoting several counties in eastern Idaho. The change was initially brought on by a change in funding that once covered the larger area.

- The Grand Teton Mall in Idaho Falls held

its grand reopening in November to show off its new multi-million dollar face lift. The renovation started in June and the mall now sports new tile, a new ceiling, family room-style seating, a large play area for children, new facades and signage on entrances, new landscaping and bike racks. General Growth Properties, the mall's owner, also added the companion Grand Teton Plaza located beside the mall on the southeastern end. It includes Ross Dress for Less, PetSmart and Best Buy that all opened in the fall. Linens 'n Things will also open a store in the plaza soon. A restaurant pad, the previous JJ North's location, is still available for lease on the northeast side of the property.

- With construction prevalent in both residential and commercial sectors, it is apparent that commercial centers have developed throughout the area. The professional business development, Taylor Crossing on the River, was established several years ago and is still growing strong; now several smaller new business developments are springing up in various places. Idaho Falls' Chantilly Park on Merlin Drive, east of the corner of St. Clair and Sunnyside roads, also was established several years ago but really started filling up in 2004. The park consists of medical and professional businesses, and features a waterfall and pond in the middle of the parking lot. Family Resource Center was the sole business on the corner of St. Clair and Sunnyside roads for several years, but is now joined by several other financial and professional businesses; Idaho Central Credit Union is the newest completed entity. Further east on Sunnyside Road, Washington Parkway has sprung up with an impressive Biddulph and Huntsman Orthopedic Specialists and Surgical Center occupying the corner. Several other medical and professional businesses have located there and many are still

under construction. East Side Galleria, a strip mall on Seventeenth Street across from Kmart, now stands ready to take tenants. Geraldine's Bake Shop & Deli claimed the east corner and is awaiting neighbors. Construction recently finished on Eagle Pointe Plaza, further east on Seventeenth Street; Sunnydays Daycare is the first tenant and six units are still available.

- Rexburg also experienced substantial growth in the commercial sector. Teton River Village, which was just a plan at the end of 2003, is at full occupancy and features a six-theater cinema with a bowling alley and several retail spaces. Several other businesses have been built around the original design, such as Jensen Jewelers and Wingers. Deseret Book, Cold Stone Creamery and several other businesses have located in the original retail spots on Second East. Rexburg Business Park on Second East gained a few new neighbors: Upper Valley Options opened earlier in 2004 and an Idaho Commerce & Labor office opened at the end of the year. The first tenant at Main Street Crossing, a four-unit retail complex on the corner of Main and Center streets, will soon celebrate a grand opening. Gandolfo's Deli is soon to open and other tenants are close behind. In St. Anthony, one tenant is moving into the city's new Business Development Center. The 8,000-square-foot building is a refreshing undertaking for the city and hopes are high for quality employers to locate there. The Oscar Wornek Business Park opened in September in Mackay. The two larger buildings make up the business incubation center, offering a great start-up location for those interested in business opportunities.
- Two larger entities opened in Idaho Falls. Lowe's demolished the old Wal-Mart building and built its own facility on Seventeenth Street. Wal-Mart opened a second Super Center on the west side of town near Interstate 15 and Broadway. Although the store did not technically open until the end of January, it had hired and was training all of its employees starting in November. Between these two businesses, about 400 jobs were added to the area.
- Anheuser-Busch completed its malt plant expansion in Idaho Falls and is fully operating. Although the new plant did not generate many new jobs due to high automation, area farmers have benefited by selling their barley directly to the company.
- Sam's Club finished its expansion in Idaho Falls, adding a one-hour photo and processing lab, vision center and extended deli along with a separate gas station.
- North Wind, Inc. built its new headquarters on the Snake River north of Highway 20. North Wind specializes in environmental cleanup and construction.
- BNFL, Inc. started operating in the Arco desert area. The facility contracts with the U.S. Department of En-

ergy to retrieve waste from the INL and will prepare it for shipment over the next 10 years.

- Deseret Industries Thrift Store replaced its existing facility with a much larger one on Second East in Rexburg.
- Rocknak's Hardware Plus moved into a new structure it built on Broadway close to its old location. The new, larger store carries more products and is now a full-project store for customers interested in remodeling.
- The Rexburg Gymnastic Center opened on North Second East and offers classes to youth and teens.
- Many smaller retail shops and fast food places opened throughout Northeast Idaho and some existing businesses added other locations.

## CONTINUING PROJECTS

- Grupo Modelo's large malt facility is still under construction and should be completed in a year. The company is headquartered in Mexico and this is its first malt facility constructed in the United States. It is located close to the Anheuser-Busch malt plant off Sunnyside Road south of Idaho Falls.
- Remodeling of a 100-year-old three-story building in downtown Idaho Falls is still in process in order to bring Destinations, a classy theme-oriented hotel, to the area. The building is on the corner of Shoup Avenue and Broadway. Two well-known businesses with experience building some of Las Vegas' landmark hotels will help in the concept and design.
- Melaleuca, an international manufacturer and marketer of health, home, and personal care products, plans to double its Rexburg operation to accommodate up to 900 jobs. The plan to add 266 desks to the 202 desks already at the location will allow part-time and full-time workers to use the desks to capacity. The center employs many students from BYU-Idaho due to their linguistic abilities—Spanish and French are languages highly used in the call center—and allows employees to pursue their education while working. Students are also able to move up with the company after their education is finished. The company has other locations in Idaho Falls and Tennessee.

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